



June 10, 2014

**KANSAS BULLETIN NO. KS300-14-44**

**SUBJECT: LTP—Fiscal Year 2014 Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Forested Riparian Buffers and Shelterbelt Renovation—Announcement and Implementation**

**Action required by:** (Field Offices [FOs])  
June 20, 2014

**Action required by:** (Area Offices [AOs])  
July 18, 2014

**Purpose:** Provide guidance on the implementation of the Forested Riparian Buffers and Shelterbelt Renovation ranking criteria and eligible conservation practices (CPs) previously known as Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI)

**This bulletin replaces Kansas Bulletin KS300-14-27. Action required by dates, contact information, and the distribution list have been updated.**

**Expiration Date:** September 30, 2015

**Background**

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) does not include CCPI as an offered farm bill program. Existing CCPI agreements will be honored through 2014 and will be compete as EQIP general applications for the remainder of the fiscal year (FY).

**Approved Proposals**

The existing CCPI agreements consist of the following two multistate proposals that were approved through EQIP that included Kansas:

- Central Great Plains Forested Riparian Buffers
- Central Great Plains Shelterbelt Renovation

These proposals were sponsored by the state forestry agencies in Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota. South Dakota is the lead state for both proposals.

(more)

**DIST:** A, F, S, C. Nelson

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
760 South Broadway Boulevard  
Salina, Kansas 67401-4604

Phone: 785-823-4500  
FAX: 855-533-5070  
[www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov)

### **Program Deadlines**

The FY2014 application evaluation period cutoff date for Forested Riparian Buffers and Shelterbelt Renovation applications was **April 18, 2014**.

FOs completed conservation plans and application rankings on **May 16, 2014**.

Application evaluation peer reviews were completed by **May 23, 2014**. This review should focus on the ranking and eligibility of the application. Additional clarification for the national questions was issued with Bulletin KS300-14-16.

The SO Programs Staff made funding decisions by **June 6, 2014**.

Approved applications over \$150,000 will follow guidance issued in Bulletin KS300-14-41. The assistant state conservationists for field operations (ASTCs-FO) will need to submit the request as soon as possible to meet the program deadlines.

Documentation will be forwarded to the Financial Management (FNM) Staff for second level review as soon as all documentation is obtained, but no later than **June 20, 2014**. Per the Kansas Quality Assurance Plan (KQAP), a contract peer review should be completed prior to second level review. A contract peer review should focus on contract documentation.

ASTCs-FO will ensure that all contracts have been obligated in Program Contracts System (ProTracts) by **July 18, 2014**.

### **Ranking Categories**

Applications will be entered in ProTracts using the “EQIP 2014” program code. All applications will be entered as “Partnership” under “Application Type” and “State or Local Government” will be entered for “Partnership Type.” Ranking categories were established in ProTracts as such:

- Central Great Plains Forested Riparian Buffers
- Central Great Plains Shelterbelt Renovation

There are no separate ranking categories for historically underserved (HU) applicants. They will apply under the applicable category listed above. They will be eligible for HU payment rates under these ranking categories.

### **Eligible Practices**

The FY2014 Riparian Forest Buffers and Shelterbelt Renovation eligible CP lists contain the CPs eligible for financial assistance in each project area (see Attachments 1 and 2). The SO will enter the payment schedule into ProTracts and Customer Service Toolkit (CST) under CCPI.

### **Ranking Criteria**

The ProTracts Ranking Tool will be used to rank eligible applications. Guidance issued in Bulletin KS300-14-16 will be used to answer national priority questions.

Eligible land uses, state and local issue questions and points assigned, and additional requirements for each project are outlined on Attachments 3 and 4. Applications are evaluated by LOCATION county.

Some of the ProTracts Ranking Tool questions require the use of geospatial data. The Conservation Programs Geospatial Information System Interface (CPGI) will be used to obtain this data. The application number in CPGI will match the application number from ProTracts.

**Working With Kansas Forest Service**

FOs will work with the Kansas Forest Service (KFS) to document resource condition, complete conservation practice planning including field sheets, and assist the applicant with CP application. This information, along with assistance from the KFS, will be used to develop conservation plans following the guidance issued.

**Contact:** Please forward feedback and questions, through established channels, to Corey L. Nelson, Resource Conservationist, at 785-823-4580 or [corey.nelson@ks.usda.gov](mailto:corey.nelson@ks.usda.gov).

*(Signed)*

ERIC B. BANKS  
State Conservationist

Attachments